

Clues Continued...

Note fallen trees all around as you go.
The rotting wood builds soil for new seedlings to grow.
Cross the blacktop drive, carefully looking left and right.
The end of your journey is almost in sight.

Historic restrooms may seem a strange place to end—
Made of local materials, see how nicely they blend?
Remember the picnic shelter when you started your quest?
These were built same time, same style as the rest.

All are examples of “Parkitecture” design.
Albert Good drew the plans with this concept in mind.
Since many CCC workers were not builders by trade,
Structures simple, yet rugged, were made.

May the building you’ve seen, both by nature and by man,
Help you look at our parks differently so you understand
Why we must together preserve this treasure in our care,
So everyone will have a place like this to share.

A different type of treasure has been placed somewhere around.
It marks your quest’s end, and is waiting to be found.
Head around back where you’ll see WOMEN written in white.
In the back of the lone stump—treasure is in sight.

Sign the book and stamp your sheet proving you completed it.
Replace the box, tightly sealed, keeping its whereabouts a secret.
Return to your car in the lot to the north.
Time on a beautiful trail is always of worth.



This quest was created by volunteers Dennis Babb and Paul Hirschfelt.

How to Quest

Quest clues and maps—created by teachers, volunteers, and/or park staff—will help you discover the natural and cultural gems of the Ohio & Erie Canalway. At the end of each quest is a hidden treasure box. Sign your name in the logbook, stamp this page, and return the box to its hiding place.

STAMP HERE

The questing season runs from April 15 through November 15.

Notice a problem or have suggestions for improving this quest? Contact Arrye Rosser at 440-546-5992 or arrye_rosser@nps.gov.

About This Program

I’m Arrye Rosser, interpretive and education specialist at Cuyahoga Valley National Park. I’d like to thank everyone who helped fulfill my dream of bringing questing to Ohio. This project was made possible by the generous support of a 2010 Parks as Classrooms grant from the National Park Service and is a partnership between many organizations.

So far, more than 70 teachers, volunteers, and park staff have been involved in writing and field testing our initial series of Canalway Quests. Our plan is to create many more in the years ahead. If you would like to volunteer, contact me at 440-546-5992 or arrye_rosser@nps.gov.

Special thanks to Emily Bryant and Steven Glazer.

The Ohio & Erie Canalway celebrates the rails, trails, landscapes, towns, and sites that grew up along the first 110 miles of the canal that helped Ohio and our nation grow.

For more information and to get copies of other quests, visit www.nps.gov/cuva and search for keyword “questing.”



Ledges Shelter construction, 1934. NPS COLLECTION

Canalway Quest

Forces That Build Quest

Enjoy a moderate hike to discover the forces shaping the Ledges landscape.



Planning Ahead

This treasure hunt takes about 60 minutes. The trail surface is uneven and sometimes rocky. Walking shoes, a Ledges area trail map (available at the kiosk), and insect repellent are recommended. You will need a pen or pencil to sign the logbook. Some people prefer using their own signature stamp and ink pad or marker.

Getting There

Start in the parking lot by Ledges Shelter, 701 Truxell Road, one mile west of Akron Cleveland Road, Peninsula, Ohio 44264.

Clues

Today you embark on a wonderful quest,
Covering parts of this area that show nature at her best.
Along the way, you will see
Forces that build the Ledges' history.

Start at the kiosk beside ONE WAY to the lot.
Read the national park's welcome and rules for this spot.

Virginia Kendall was the first name of the park you are in;
Before that, a private resort that belonged to a captain.
Captain Hayward Kendall made money selling coal by the ton;
Bought this land from Harvey Ritchie, so guests could have fun.

When Captain Kendall died, he gave the land to others,
Asking the state to build a park named after his mother.
To explore this gift, follow ONE WAY in a straight line.
Take the walkway right at the CLOSED AT DUSK sign.

Up the paved walkway, read the exhibit to understand
The significance of employing many a young man.
Though they built a picnic shelter of block and of wood,
Without Mother Nature, it could never have stood.

During the 1930s, when the Depression made folks poor,
President Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps.
They built this great park; the wood that was right
Was American chestnut that died from blight.



Installing stone stairway, circa 1936. NPS COLLECTION

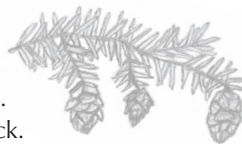


Chestnuts grew on this land by the thousands, they say,
And through the use of their wood they remain here today.
See the shelter's stone, quarried nearby from layers below—
Not from any of the rocks you'll see as we go.

Look at the shelter as you move along.
The construction is simple, and yet it is strong.
Face the blacktop drive with the shelter behind you.
Turn left onto it, heading north with forest in view.

Road becomes path, and into the woods you go.
As you walk, look ahead—a different tree starts to show.
What's this? A fairy tale land that you see?
These evergreens are hemlocks, a type of conifer tree.

About 12,000 years ago, when the glaciers receded,
Hemlocks built a forest; from cones they were seeded.
They like a cool, moist climate—this area does not lack.
Examine their needles, flat with two white lines on the back.



When the path ends at a T, a decision you must make.
The trail on the right is the one you should take.
Heading east, the top of a stairway will soon appear.
The cliffs named Ritchie Ledges are very near.

Now pause for a moment before the stairs you descend.
Step down with caution, or your quest may prematurely end!
Well built in the 1930s by those boys from the CCC,
These stairs are fun to count, over 50 there be.

Note the circular pattern of the stones laid there,
And read about the young men who placed them with care.
Stairs at your back, turn right—feel air moist and cool.
Climate built a special habitat here, quite a jewel.

A long time ago, over 300 million years it be,
The land where you stroll was part of a sea.
But things started happening, a building process took place,
The results of which are in front of your face.

Fast-moving streams carried tiny bits of distant rock,
Slowed down, dropped their loads, now compacted into block.
Called Sharon Conglomerate, it's the Ledges sandstone,
Embedded with quartz pebbles—many sizes are shown.

Have you noticed how trees along this trail
Cling to the rocks? Their roots rarely fail.
Climbing is fine for trees, ferns, and moss,
But not allowed for humans, lives too precious for loss.

Explore the rock crevices as they come into sight—
You'll see them occasionally, just look to your right.
Return to the trail and continue south when you're done—
There are more areas on this quest that promise fun!

Come to a wood bridge, over which you must cross.
On your right is a rock wall covered in lichen and moss.
A little farther and it's time to be brave—
You are approaching the popular Ice Box Cave.

Not a true cave, it's more like a crack
Or a very deep crevice, reaching 50 feet back.
Formed when the rock wall broke loose,
Weakened by water flowing down like a sluice.

Detour briefly to squeeze between the rocks
And guess why this place is called Ice Box.
It's time to continue and return to the trail,
Out into the open where the air's not so stale.

Straight south on Ledges Trail is your next move,
Crossing bridges over springs emerging from rock grooves.
Soon a larger bridge comes into view—
This is the edge of the hemlock forest, it's true.

Not many rocks in this section: new tree types and grass;
Be vigilant for critters large and small that might pass.
Many birds build nests here, hidden from view—
Acadian flycatcher, wood thrush, and barred owl, for a few.